

# IGNATIANA

No. 8

MARCH 1956

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## Ignatius To-day

TO the glory of St Ignatius let it be said that he would not wish his sons of to-day so much to do what he did as to do what he would have done had he lived in our day. What then would Ignatius have done to-day?

First let us see what determined Ignatius in his choice of works. His principle was clear: "that should always be resolved which makes for a greater service of God and the universal good" (P. VII, c. 2, n. 1). For "so much the more divine is a good, as it is more universal" (ibid. D). Ignatius did not just stop to consider whether a work was good and holy, but whether it was the most necessary one, the most fruitful, the most comprehensive. Hence he was so doggedly determined not to tie down his society to any one special type of work. The special work of the society was to be the one that in a given time and place was the most necessary and effective in promoting the interests of God and the salvation and sanctification of the greater number of souls.

This supposes a burning devotion to Christ's interest and an absolute detachment from all personal plans and purposes, personal fads and fancies. Here comes in the great rôle to be played by Ignatian abnegation. The most effective work for God's greater glory will not usually be the comfortable, settled job; rather it will often mean giving up the comfortable and settled job for a new, difficult, risky undertaking; it will mean trying something new and consequently running into obstacles, innumerable obstacles, opposition, misunderstandings, failure.

With this in mind it will be very easy to understand why Ignatius for instance embarked on the work of the Education of Youth. Ignatius was not what one would call a man of letters. Study for its own sake had little interest for him. Had he consulted his own tastes, he would never have undertaken the work of education. But Ignatius was clear-sighted and he had at heart God's greater glory. He looked into the world of his time and his mind spotted the root of all the trouble. The 'renaissance' was

the fuel that kept the fires of the 'reformation' burning. With the rebirth of the learning of Greece and Rome there was a rebirth of the errors and vices of Greece and Rome. The Christian culture of Europe was changing into the licentious, epicurean culture of decadent Greece and Rome. Let the thing spread, and education would be in the hands of the Godless, learning and culture would be synonymous with licentiousness and godlessness.

A danger of like magnitude had threatened Christianity in the 13th century—Europe then had no philosophical system and philosophy then seemed to be in fashion. The Greek and Arab philosophers were studied and the danger, little appreciated perhaps to-day, was then present that a pagan and unchristian philosophy might become the accepted one for the intelligentsia of Europe. But the sons of St Dominic, notably St Thomas, stepped into the breach, and by baptising Aristotle, saved Philosophy and made it a handmaid of truth and reality.

As Thomas saved the thought of Europe, Ignatius saved the culture of Europe. He sent his men into the school-room and university lecture-halls, and so oriented the new learning to serve the cause of Christ. As St Thomas baptised Aristotle, the Jesuits in a sense baptised Vergil and Cicero, Demosthenes and Homer. Men's sense of value, of goodness and beauty, which was in peril of being contaminated and vitiated, was saved and set free to grow and expand on right lines. Jesuits thus became the school-masters of Europe, and through their schools they inaugurated the true renaissance, and through it the true reformation which historians have chosen to call the 'Counter-Reformation'.

St Ignatius applied the same principle in determining the people for whom his sons should work. They were to seek the greater common good and, consequently, give their preference, *ceteris paribus*, to those who were more in need, or gave out the promise of greater fruit, or were in positions of influence. Thus he sent his men to win over to the cause of Christ the great and noble of the land, kings and princes, Viceroys and Governors, Cardinals and Bishops. By this no doubt he was exposing his sons to the insidious temptations of the pomp and pleasure of court life, and his Society to the cavils and slanders of her enemies. But risk and danger were never deterrents to St Ignatius when once he realised the necessity and importance of a work. In the monarchical and oligarchic politico-social structure of his day, he saw clearly that influencing the great and mighty was influencing and winning over a whole people. The Saint was thus a master strategist in Christ's cause and he exploited his opportunities to the fullest.

If then Ignatius was living to-day, what work would he undertake, whom would he set about influencing? The answer is not difficult to find. To-day the battle for man's soul is waged not directly in the philosophical field, neither directly in the cultural field, but in the economical field. The factory and the mill



are the symbols of our age, technical skill and scientific progress the means, economic sufficiency and material prosperity the goal of our age. The forces that mould and direct these are largely unchristian and godless. Even in Christian lands, the industrial sections of the people have been paganised and far removed from the influence of Christ and His Church. The Evil is spreading rapidly. To-day moreover the entire East is astir and shaken by mighty urges towards achieving economic sufficiency, industrial advancement and material prosperity. These in themselves are not evil purposes. But which are the forces that to-day are busily at work influencing, infiltrating, and moulding these urges?

Had Ignatius been living to-day, we feel sure he would send his sons into industrial and technical schools, labour organizations and trade unions, to influence and mould, guide and direct. He would have set about changing the factories and mills, where man is dehumanised and exploited, into Temples where God is worshipped in justice and in truth, where one's neighbour is served in love and mercy, and where each individual can bring to flower and fruit the good that is in him.

That the spirit of St Ignatius is alive in the Society is proved by the XXIX General Congregation, in its 29th decree, calling upon the members of the Society to devote themselves to the Social Apostolate; and Very Rev. Fr General begins his memorable instruction on the Social Apostolate with these weighty words: "In our anxiety to meet the threats that are at present confronting us in daily increasing numbers, there is danger that we may fix our attention on the present evil effects rather than on their root causes, and thus, overlooking the wider and more enduring good, dissipate the apostolic efforts of the Society on the pursuit of immediate and less important objectives."

"The great misery of the Social Order to-day", says Pope Pius XII, "is that it is neither deeply Christian nor really human." "We hear", he said on another occasion, "that labour 'has lost its soul', that is to say, the personal and social sense of human life." The task of the hour clearly is that we make the Social Order both truly human and deeply Christian; that we give labour its soul. In the measure in which we do so, in that measure do we stem the tide of atheistic Communism.

The transformation and reorientation that Ignatius effected in the field of education has to-day to be effected in the field of labour. And from this it will not be difficult to suppose the type of people Ignatius would particularly have set out to influence to-day. In the modern world there is scarcely a leader of consequence who owes his position to birth and fortune. As a matter of fact nowadays these are often hindrances to advancement into positions of power and influence. We feel that Ignatius would to-day have his men shed some of their exclusiveness, and be seen more in the market-square and the mill-yard, establishing

cordial, friendly relations with all and sundry, with a special smile for the union leaders and the secretaries of the various labour organisations. No doubt keeping one's inviolability and spiritual transcendency while moving with the milling crowd will demand deep learning and sterling virtue, but that is what a Jesuit's long period of training is expected to supply him with. Ignatius planned his Society for difficult tasks, otherwise their long and arduous training makes no sense...

Since World War II, the world has changed and continues changing at a quick pace. But the Church is not afraid of changes; she goes out to meet them not in a craven, defeatist attitude but in a conquering spirit: for, as Chesterton remarked, "the Church does not move with the times, it moves the times", and Ignatius's Society moves with the Church.

HILARY MIRANDA, S.J.

## The Development of the Apostolic Spirituality of St Ignatius of Loyola\*

TO understand anything of the interior life of St Ignatius or his apostolic activity, we must inevitably return to a study of his book of the Spiritual Exercises. This book must be unique in the history of religious thought. For Ignatius left, in the Spiritual Exercises, a work not so much to be read as to be lived. It is in this unique work which, for four centuries past, has fired men to an interior and apostolic life, that we discover the foundations of the life work of Ignatius, whether as a man of prayer or, to God's greater glory, a man of action. But, if we are to understand the spiritual movement that takes its origin from the Spiritual Exercises, we must retrace the story of the evolution of Ignatius's thought.

Inigo was a man of his time: a volcanic Hidalgo, "given over", his secretary Polanco bluntly tells us, "to duels, games", preferring death to dishonour, an enthusiast, a man of generosity. His Christian faith was wholesome; his temperament overflowing with vitality and youth; he is of the stuff of the great adventurers of the days of Charles V. But, by a gratuitous grace, God rescued Inigo's enthusiasm and generosity to serve henceforth as an instrument for His own glory. It is on a sick bed at Loyola that Inigo discovered God, and in the discovery found a new meaning for life. In his first confused gropings, he is irresistibly drawn to realize in his own life the ideals set forth in the Sermon on the Mount and feels himself called to the performance of rigorous bodily mortifications.

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\*Adapted by A. Delbeke, from R. Rouquette, "Le développement de la spiritualité apostolique de Saint Ignace, *Christus* 2, pp. 21ff.



Convinced at once of the necessity of accomplishing the will of God, he is faced with the fact of his own sinfulness. So, he will devote three days of his sojourn at Montserrat to the confession of his sins. At length we can see Ignatius, the penitent sinner, devote himself totally to God through chastity and radical poverty. Like so many converts of the Middle Ages, he wants to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, after which he proposes to enter the strictest Carthusian monastery in Spain. At the time of his conversion, he scarcely knows how to pray, yet, four months later, he is elevated to the mystical heights from which he will never depart. This is a basic fact one must remember in order to understand Ignatius, who by 1544 had reached the highest peak of this mystical life. And yet, from all his mystical experiences, Ignatius comes forth as a man of action, an apostle. It is at Manresa that this apostle is formed. And among the special graces accorded Ignatius in the days at Manresa was the gift of the discernment of spirits without which a truly Ignatian election is unthinkable.

The mystical experiences of Ignatius in those early days were to be essentially *sui diffusiva*, for from 1523 onwards, after he had left Manresa, he realised that his vocation was "to produce spiritual fruit in souls". It was to this end he would henceforth direct his life, the penitent giving full scope to the zeal of the apostle, for whom the salvation of the world is of paramount importance. By 1524, just after his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, his vocation had become for him something clearer still, though he had not abandoned his life of humility and poverty inspired by the Holy Ghost. But now he had come to see that his aim, the glory of God through a direct apostolate, required of him a life of study, a new orientation of his ideal of poverty and an acceptance of the ideal of obedience as found in the traditional monastic life.

### *Apostolate and Human Culture*

The glory of God and the salvation of souls was now the great end of the new Ignatius. Having lived the Spiritual Exercises, he realised the necessity of subordinating the means to the end. Studies were therefore but a means to the end, so it would be idle to imagine Ignatius entering on the study of the humanities like some Renaissance enthusiast. But study he would to enable him the better to work for souls. Later, when General of the Society, he required his Jesuits to learn not only rational but especially positive theology in order to promote within themselves, no less than in the souls entrusted to them, the love and service of God. Now, therefore, when he himself had decided to pursue a course of humanities with the service of souls in view, he arrived at this characteristic threefold decision: (1) to shorten the time for prayer in his daily life, the better to prepare himself for his apostolic work; (2) to substitute more and more interior mortification for his bodily austerities; (3) to moderate considerably the material poverty in which he had been living. This threefold resolution was, I say,

characteristic of the man who had learned in the Exercises the wholesome lesson of subordinating the means to the end.

His customary seven hours of daily prayer were now reduced to one; the bodily austerities of Manresa were wisely mitigated; poverty, too, he had now moderated, as when he arrived in Paris provided with the necessary gold and a donkey to carry his modest luggage. He discovered also that begging was not conducive to the efficient prosecution of his studies. So he will, in future, beg only during the holidays in order to gather enough money to meet his expenses for at least some months. His ultimate purpose was the apostolate, but now he realised that the immediate apostolate could only be an obstacle to his studies. Once more he takes the characteristic resolution of abandoning this immediate apostolate so as to make sure of a more efficient apostolate in the days ahead. Indeed, he resolved to go to France, not because Paris gave better degrees, but because he would be less tempted by an immediate apostolate in view of his ignorance of the French language.

### *From Poverty to Obedience*

From the very beginning, Ignatius had taken the resolution of serving God in a community. So, with this end in view, he gathered together at Alcala in 1526 a few companions. These, however, did not persevere. A similar effort at Paris also ended in failure. A third attempt was successful, when the nucleus of the future Society of Jesus was formed. This third band of Ignatius's companions, who were destined to persevere, were men of strong will like their leader and at one with him in their determination to refuse any ecclesiastical benefices, the pursuit of which plagued the Church of the sixteenth century. Such a band of men, resolutely adverse to ecclesiastical preferment and self-dedicated to the ideal of apostolic poverty, was surely a phenomenon of the age in which they lived. Without adverting to it, Ignatius and his companions had become true Catholic reformers at a time when the Church was in sore need of such men.

Many non-Catholic writers are convinced that the Society of Jesus was founded to combat the Lutheran revolt against the Church, but their contention will not stand up to a critical examination of the facts. In those early days, Ignatius and his companions had more in mind the sore necessity of evangelising the countries of the infidels than the pressing need of meeting the Lutheran peril. It is only some thirty years later that the Jesuits themselves came to realise how Providence used the Society as an instrument in stemming the Protestant defection from the Church. But in the period of which we are speaking that instrument was not yet forged. Ignatius and his companions had not yet given themselves a government or constitutions, nor did they yet seem to have adverted to such a need. Their only bond was the spirit of the Exercises and a common desire to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem and devote themselves to apostolic work.



In 1534, at Montmartre, they take the vows of poverty and chastity but not (let us note the fact) of obedience. No one among them holds the position of superior. Ignatius is for his companions but an elder brother, a spiritual friend whom they love and respect. Slowly, however, this spiritual fraternity changes into a body with greater cohesion. Decisions are now taken on a majority of votes; obedience to the community (but not yet to a superior) is already accepted by their free choice.

We may well see the hand of Providence at work in the fact that the little band had to abandon their plan of going to Jerusalem. They now offered their services to the Pope, who was only too eager to welcome such men who were so disinterested in all but the service of God and the good estate of His Church. His Holiness sends them forth to the four corners of Italy. What was now to become of the little company of Montmartre? Would it still maintain its identity or would it dissolve? Should they unite in a religious congregation? To discover the answer to these questions, they give over a month to prayer, when led by the Spirit of God they all agree to elect one Superior. It is obedience that provides them with a bond of permanent union, a vital principle which will co-ordinate and canalise their efforts in the work of the apostolate. In the new condition of the company, after the election of Ignatius as superior, the emphasis on apostolic poverty changes for the emphasis on obedience. This is but one more illustration of the insistence of the Exercises on the subordination of the means to the end. There is no loss, however, of the ideal of poverty in the new orientation of the company, for the company's future Constitutions will enjoin that "all love poverty as mother".

### *Apostolate and Monastic Forms*

Yet the form of the little group, as it appears in 1539, will still undergo further change. The Office in Choir and a distinctive religious habit were practices of the traditional monasticism that Ignatius and his companions did not adopt. But other aspects of the old monastic tradition, which were also dispensed with in these early days, will be reintroduced at a later date. The first ministries of the Society were some missions to different places in Italy. Characteristic of these first missions was the teaching of the catechism to the masses and the children. They reintroduced the frequent use of the Sacraments of Penance and Communion. Through the Exercises they were able to instil into the clergy a new spirit of zeal. An almost miraculous awakening of the faith became noticeable wherever these companions of Ignatius exercised their ministry. But, how could the work of these men be of lasting value? They must soon have realised that the foundation of social charity groups and confraternities was not enough. The vineyards would need the continued presence of husbandmen. The Society would need to be attached to some houses

where the companions could remain and consolidate the work already accomplished.

Permanent domiciles for the companions was only a stage of the evolution of the Society. A still further development soon and inevitably suggested itself. New members must be recruited, and the admission of new recruits creates the need for houses of formation. The creation of Colleges, which should be open to non-Jesuits, will eventually fix the Society to determined places and re-introduce something of the old monastic tradition. In the beginning, Ignatius had excluded Colleges as the only field of activity not suited to the new Society; but later, seeing how necessary a means they were for the formation of men of solid Catholic practice, he unhesitatingly decided to accept this form of apostolate. In 1547, he took the decisive step of opening the College of Messina in Sicily. This was the last change in his thought respecting the works to which his sons should devote themselves. In opening the College of Messina, he sent his best men to take charge of the venture. Within a generation of his death, the Jesuits, on the admission of non-Catholic historians, had become the outstanding schoolmasters of Europe, and even Protestant countries were not slow to copy and adopt the *ratio studiorum* of the Society.

In Rome itself, Ignatius opened two Colleges, the Roman College in 1551 and the German College in the following year. It was from these two Colleges that Cardinal Pole conceived the idea of diocesan seminaries. In turn, the Council of Trent itself will stress the necessity of founding and maintaining such seminaries throughout the Universal Church, as one of the most efficient means of spreading the counter-reformation... When Ignatius died in 1556, the Society counted about a hundred houses of which thirty-six were Colleges.

The primitive idea of the pilgrim of Manresa was simply "to produce spiritual fruit in souls". Only gradually and by experience did Ignatius realise how this might best be brought about. It was brought about, in fact, by the foundation of a new religious order, but an order of a kind that departed in many important respects from what Europe till then understood by the term. Now, if we are to look for the soul of this living and homogeneous development in the Society which has made it possible for her to remain faithful to the spirit of St Ignatius through the vicissitudes of history, we must do so in Ignatius's greatest legacy to his sons: the Spiritual Exercises. For the Exercises contain the original idea from which everything else is derived. "Our Lord", says Nadal, "communicated to Ignatius the Exercises, leading him so that he should put himself entirely at His service and at the service of souls." The quintessence of the Jesuit idea will be found in a special manner in the Kingdom and The Two Standards. It is in these that Ignatius understood his vocation and discerned the first lineaments of his master work, the Society of Jesus.



## “ . . . Like the Angels ”

WHAT pertains to the vow of chastity needs no explanation as it is plain how perfectly it should be observed, namely in striving to imitate *angelic purity* in cleanness of both body and mind.”

How often, these, the only words written by St Ignatius directly on chastity have been a puzzle to us, especially from the moment that we tried seriously to get at their meaning! For chastity is a problem for *men* not for angels. In his desire to describe religious chastity as strongly and positively as possible, St Ignatius could think of no term of reference clearer than the pure spirit that has no experience of a body, not to speak of a body that is part of a fallen nature. It was not however any Manichean contempt for the flesh that inspired our Blessed Father when he wrote the Constitutions, every word of which he had weighed and prayed over. Ignatian spirituality, besides, is intimately concerned with man's composite nature. All the forms and methods of prayer found in the Spiritual Exercises make ample use of material images. Interior knowledge of the truths revolved upon, is reinforced by the method called the 'application of the senses'. The Ignatian Contemplation, unlike that of the mystics in their 'mansions of the soul', remains in almost material contact with the persons, words and actions of a particular 'mystery' or event. Even the last great Contemplation of the Exercises takes its cue from the consideration of God working in, and pouring His gifts into, this world of sight and sound and touch.<sup>1</sup> If then the raising of the mind to God, which is prayer, has to take so much account of the truth that we are matter as well as spirit, how much more that virtue which, more than any other, has its very reason of existence in the fact that we have bodies. And yet we are told about our practice of chastity—not that we should engage in this or that form of bodily penance, which would be at once intelligible—but that we should strive to imitate *angelic purity*, purity that is unrelated to the body! I hope it is not temerarious to attempt an explanation of these words.

Religious chastity to be properly understood has to be studied in the context of the religious life and history. Among the Fathers and till to-day in the Eastern Churches, monastic life is known by the name *BIOS ANGELIKOS*<sup>2</sup>. The monk by free renunciation of the world chooses to be a fellow-citizen of the angels.

1. The same awareness of, and insistence on, the role of the body in prayer is seen in the Additions, particularly Nos. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10. The direction that the Part. Exam. throughout the Retreat should be concerned with these additions shows what importance St Ignatius attached to them: much so that some have compared them to the *asanas* or bodily poses that precede *dhyana* or meditation in the Yogic system.

2. Cf. 'La Vie Monastique et ses problemes actuels', par Agnès Lamy. *Dieu Vivant*, No. 7, p. 59.

His rôle in society is to bear witness to the reality of the supernatural order; to those who think only of "the Jerusalem which exists here and now, an enslaved city whose children are slaves" he must proclaim the glory of "the heavenly Jerusalem our Mother, a city of freedom" (Gal. 4, 26). If St Paul could tell his Corinthians, "Nothing remains but for those who have wives to behave as though they had none..." (I Cor. 7, 29) the religious must obviously be given terms of comparison that this world does not possess. "When the dead rise again", Our Lord told the Sadducees who tried to trap Him in his words "there is no marrying or giving in marriage, they are *as the angels in heaven are*" (Matt. 22, 30). This was said of all the elect, irrespective of their state of life on earth. Applying the idea to the religious life the author of the *Imitation* says, "We should walk in His sight *as the angels do*, in purity" (Bk I, ch. 19). There is no doubt that it was under the inspiration of these texts that St Ignatius drafted the passage in question in the Constitutions. Since religious life is already here *Bios angelikos*—an attempt to realise here and now in our fleshly condition what we shall be in the company of the angels when we shall have assumed glorified bodies—, there is perfect justification in the demand that our practice of chastity should be conformable to our calling and state. "Nobody should wonder", says St Ambrose, "that they who are linked to the angels of the Lord be compared to angels."<sup>3</sup>

So much for the ideal. What are the concrete realities of its pursuit in the religious life? It is evident that they cannot consist merely in the negative though magnificent gesture of sacrificing the natural right, every human being has, to found a home and taste the pure joys of family life. Nor is it just the faithful observance of the sixth commandment in all its completeness. It implies a positive orientation of the soul; it is not the cold giving up of the love of man or woman, in which after the experience of a certain tension of mind one gets the human satisfaction of having made a great act of renunciation. This would be a human virtue. Christian chastity is born in utter humility. It comes from the realisation that the Omnipotent has deigned to cast His regard upon our lowliness in order to raise us to the privilege of being in relation to Him what dimly and brokenly the beloved is to her lover. What one gives up in legitimate joy and natural right is *paltry* compared to what one receives at the hands of Him whom the poet Thompson calls "the Tremendous Lover". Of the vow of chastity, more than of the others, it may be said:

we made no vows, but vows  
Were then made for us; bond unknown to us  
Was given, that we should be, else sinning greatly,  
Dedicated spirits.<sup>4</sup>

3. *De Virginibus ad Marcellinam*, Lib. I, Cap. III, N. 11 (Migne, P. I. Tom. 16, p. 202).

4. Adapted from: Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Bk IV, ll. 76-78



Dedicated spirits, —that is the right phrase! The religious is nothing if not that. The vows are an expression of total self-surrender to God. Bodily chastity is only a pointer to that more complete chastity which St Thomas calls spiritual.<sup>5</sup> It is easy, surely, to mistake the phrase and reduce chastity to a very general virtue including practically everything else, just as the contrary vice —fornication— covers in the old Testament every act of disloyalty to Jehovah on the part of the chosen people, but chiefly idolatry, for that was the besetting sin. Nevertheless the God to whom the religious surrenders all the faculties of his body and of his soul is that “ Word who is Life, whom we have heard, have seen with our eyes, and whom our hands have handled.” (1 John 1, 1)

How well the realisation of this purpose is served by the second fundamental meditation of the Spiritual Exercises, from which flows all the rest of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th weeks, the Contemplation namely on Christ the King, “ the Eternal King, how much more worthy of consideration than any earthly sovereign ”. The Oblation at the end of this Contemplation contains in germ, and initiates, that total surrender which is sealed in the *Sume et Suscipe* of the last Contemplation, ‘ to obtain Love ’; In love and by love alone can such a surrender be achieved. Where it is done for any other motive, or only half-heartedly with the gaze turned back even if only occasionally, the Vow of Chastity becomes to that extent a burden. This is not to say of course that by one stroke of self-giving all difficulty or temptation is finally eliminated, or that the body ceases to be for us what St Paul calls, ‘ the body of this death ’ ( Rom. 7, 24 ). The *Bios angelikos* in the world implies necessarily a more intense and continuous battle, not only with our own natural weakness, not only with “ flesh and blood ”, but with “ principdoms and powers . . . with malign influences in an order higher than ours ” ( Eph. 6, 12 ). The enormous place given to the activity of the bad angels in monastic life and traditions, is based upon sound experience and reason. That is why the meditation on the Two Standards, especially its first part, is of permanent importance throughout religious life. That is why we can never neglect the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits. But once the foundation of ‘ the Kingdom ’ is well laid, once our souls are smitten incurably by the love of Christ, there is no doubt that the vow of chastity is being positively realised. Its continuity is assured by the daily seeking, in the characteristic Ignatian manner, “ to know Our Lord more intimately, to love Him more ardently, to imitate Him more faithfully ” —the invariable purpose and intended fruit of the Ignatian Contemplation.

5. “ For, if the human mind delight in the spiritual union with that to which it behoves it to be united, namely God, and refrain from delighting in union with other things against the requirements of the order established by God, this may be called a spiritual chastity according to 2 Cor., 11, 2, ‘ I have betrothed you to Christ, so that no other but He should claim you, His bride without spot ’. ” ( 2a 2ae, q. 151, a. 2, corp.)

Dwelling in the love of Christ, re-living with Him the mysteries of His life from the Incarnation to the Ascension, we give a true positive turn to the renunciation of "the love of creature-comforts, love of flesh and blood and love of the world". How profound a meaning, then, takes on the favourite Ignatian prayer which prefaces the Spiritual Exercises, the *Anima Christi*, in which union is sought with the Incarnate Word under every aspect of His human nature, and how significant the two petitions in it, "Never permit me to be separated from Thee" and "From the malignant foe defend me".

But the love of Christ cannot be confined within the limits of personal intimacy with Him in prayer. To the cenobite especially, such as most religious are, it cannot but manifest itself in the love of one's brethren in religious life. Fraternal charity is thus intimately connected with the vow of chastity. The common life in religion is precisely meant by Divine Providence to fill the place left empty by the sundering of natural ties, but to fill it in a more than natural fashion: for while human affections can and ought to develop inside the religious family, they cannot remain at that level without destroying its foundations. For the religious family is the divinely appointed meeting-ground of earth with heaven. Our human hearts have to be exercised inside the cloister, but they learn at the same time to be active instruments of divine love. This is the reverse process as it were, of the Incarnation: this is man's response to God; for "God became man in order to live His divinity in a human fashion . . . to practise His holy and divine purity in His human life, to exercise His eternal love with His heart of flesh . . ." <sup>6</sup> In religious life, by the vow of chastity which may be called a vow of divine love, man tries consciously and freely to reply to God's benignant gesture, thus fulfilling on the part of the creature the purpose of God becoming man, which St Thomas expresses in these words, "The Son of God did not become man for His own sake . . . but to make us God with Him through grace." <sup>7</sup>

But the *Theosis* (divinisation) is inseparable from the mystery of the *kenosis* (dispossession). For, those who on earth participate most intensely in the divinisation of the human nature are also the ones who share more deeply than others in the kenosis. <sup>8</sup> In so far as the body is a hindrance to the work of deification or diminishes the value of the soul's surrender of itself to God it has to be mortified. In the active apostolic life of the religious this mortification cannot concentrate, though it may not neglect the practice of bodily austerities. The occasions for true corporal self-denial, though never lacking in community life, arise mainly from the very nature of the exterior work the religious engages in.

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6. Romano Guardini, *Le Seigneur*. Tome I, p. 26

7. S. Theol. III, q. 37, a. 3, ad 2

8. *Dieu Vivant*, Art. cited, p. 74



In all his contacts with the world he has to keep alive in his mind the duty of bearing constant witness to the *Bios angelikos* and this itself involves 'the continual mortification' demanded by St Ignatius (Summ. R. 12). To show our love of God in the love of those whom we serve, the total devotion of body and soul is necessary. The vow of chastity thus assumes a concrete and practical importance. Writing from his Roman prison to the Philippians, St Paul says: "This is my earnest longing and my hope that I shall never be put to the blush, that I shall speak with entire freedom, and so *this body of mine* will do Christ honour, now as always in life and death." (1, 20). Neither here nor in that other oft-quoted phrase, 'to spend and be spent' is Paul using a figure of speech. For such spending alone gives any positive content, any sense, to what appears the negative sacrifice of family life with all that it implies not only of joy and comfort but of work, responsibility and care.

"It is not because it is found in martyrs that virginity is worthy of praise, but because it makes martyrs."<sup>9</sup> These words of St Ambrose express as well as words can, the meaning of the heroic pursuit of chastity in religion. Whether or not this daily martyrdom is clearly discernible to the eye, a virtue that is so intimately linked with our bodily existence cannot but influence our entire comportment and bearing, all our activities and relationships. That is well symbolized by the habit which St Ignatius prescribed for his sons: it is not of any particular stuff, colour or cut of cloth; it is the equally visible and no less effective and distinguishing garb described in the Rules of Modesty and S.R. 29. The bodily control and restraint that these are expected to help in achieving, are not only part of that surrender of bodily rights that one makes by the second vow, but they are among the positive means and instruments of the apostolate among men and women. And all this must be constantly referred to its main spring, namely love, the love of God in His Son Incarnate. 'Castitas' may philologically be derived from 'castigatio'; but its true parent is Caritas. The flame that it kindles in the soul lights up, and is reflected by, the body: where it burns bright and pure, the senses are chastened and purified in a way that bodily chastisement by itself cannot accomplish. There are religious Congregations, and there are moments in all religious life, where the participation of the body in the inner purity of the soul is less hidden from the eyes, for example among all those who with God's own love tend the most miserable and wretched of human beings, the castaways, the leprous and the putrid in body. Here is one among many examples taken from the account of a certain Sr Caroline who died in the Leper Hospital at Kumbakonam, not long ago: "Her wounds, she called them her jewels, they became for her her necklaces, her bracelets, rings, ear-drops and diamonds which had been given her by the *Master of her body and*

9. *De Virg.*, Lib. I, loc. cit., n. 10

soul<sup>10</sup>. In the presence of such facts understood in their Christian and religious context, what concerns the vow of chastity needs, in truth, no explanation.

LAWRENCE SUNDARAM

## The Mind of St Ignatius on Prayer

1. *Distinguished service* of the Eternal King and Lord of All was, since the days of Manresa, the supreme ideal and sole ambition of Ignatius of Loyola. The manner in which Christ Jesus wished to be served was also perfectly clear to the saint: it should consist in doing good to souls, in promoting the greatest possible spiritual progress of the greatest number of souls. For, the greater the number of people who benefit from some good done, the more divine is that good<sup>1</sup>.

This ideal and ambition St Ignatius bequeathed to the Society, whose whole spirituality and legislation he designed for its realization.

2. *But only the grace of our God and Lord Jesus Christ can save souls*<sup>2</sup>. The redemption of the world is, and remains forever, His work. The Saviour, however, designs to invite men to join Him in this enterprise and labour with Him<sup>3</sup>. The Society of Jesus is a body of men who wish to respond to this call of Christ and distinguish themselves in His service. *How* can they help Christ save souls? All that they —or, for that matter, any apostle— can aspire to is to become *instruments* of salvation in the hands of Christ. The closer the instrument will be united to the divine agent, and the more responsive to His guidance they will prove, the more fruitful also shall be their apostolate<sup>4</sup>.

Jesus had said, "I am the vine, you are its branches; if a man lives on in me and I in Him, then he will yield abundant fruit"<sup>5</sup>. Ignatius merely echoes the Master's teaching when he writes, "Among the various gifts with which it is desirable that the General be adorned" —and he intended the General to be a pattern for his brethren— "this is the first of all: that he be most closely united with God our Lord and intimate with Him both in prayer and in all his actions, so that he may obtain from Him, as the Source of all good, for the whole body of the Society a more abundant participation in His gifts and graces, as also great power and efficacy for all the means that the Society uses in the help of souls."<sup>6</sup>

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10. *Ecclesia*, Nov. 1953, Art. Sr Caroline, par Remy

1. P. VII, c. 2, D

2. Cfr P. X, n. 1

3. Cfr Sp Ex. [95]

4. Cfr P. X, n. 2

5. Jn 15, 5

6. P. IX, c. 2, n. 1



3. *How is this union with God*, which Ignatius proposes to his sons as the supreme object of their desires and efforts, *to be understood and achieved*? Which are "those means which join the instrument with God and dispose it to be guided aright by the divine hand"? Ignatius enumerates them: "such are uprightness and virtues, especially charity, the pure intention to serve God, close intercourse with Him in exercises of devotion, and a sincere zeal for souls."

Elsewhere he had listed 'charity, humility, and detachment from creatures' as the virtues most recommended to the General<sup>8</sup> in his endeavour to become "most closely united with God".

In other words, Ignatius, the great idealist and mystic, is also a very practical realist. In his view, union with God is to be sought first and foremost in the practice of virtue. In solitary prayer too, no doubt: but that union consists essentially in sanctifying grace and expresses itself by charity and the virtues of which charity is the root. Formal prayer is indispensable, but it *alone* would not be a safe guide or test. Hence the saint's lofty considerations on union with God conclude with the admonition, "Let therefore all who belong to the Society apply themselves to the pursuit of solid and perfect virtues and of spiritual qualities, accounting these of greater moment".<sup>9</sup>

4. Ignatius proceeds yet one step further: according to him, what matters most in spiritual life is *self-denial*. For, "the greatest hindrance that prevents a soul from rising up to God and uniting itself with Him proceeds from attachment to self, which weighs it down and keeps it back".<sup>10</sup> If only a man will, by dint of penance and abnegation, purify his heart from disordered affections and all manifestations of self-love, God, the author of all grace and virtue, will do the rest. In such a soul He will work wonders beyond expectation. "Blessed are the clean of heart; they shall see God" (Mt. 5, 8). Hence Ignatius's master principle, "Everyone must keep in mind that in all that concerns the spiritual life his progress will be in proportion to his surrender of self-love and of his own will and interests"<sup>11</sup>. He firmly holds that "he who has once (conquered himself) will unite himself more closely with God in a quarter-of-an-hour of recollection than an unmortified man can do during many hours of prayer"<sup>12</sup>; and he preferred his sons to be praised for their spirit of abnegation than for their long prayers<sup>13</sup>. To him, therefore, "*mortification was the gauge of prayer*, but the inverse was not true".<sup>14</sup>

7. P. X, n. 2

8. P. IX, c. 2, nn. 2, 3. These are the very virtues which St Teresa in her "Way of Perfection" considers the best dispositions for contemplation.

9. P. X, n. 2

10. Quoted by de Franciosi, *Esprit de St Ignace*, 1948, p. 228

11. Sp. Ex. [189]

12. Quoted de Franciosi, *ibid.*

13. Gonzalez, *Memor.*, n. 195

14. Gagliardi, *De plena cognitione Institutii*, De orat. VII

5. The Founder of the Society, then, wishes his sons to seek union with God through the practice of virtue and "in all things" no less than through prayer. The nature of this union with God "in all things and in every action" demands further elucidation.

The early Jesuits are unanimous in testifying that their Founder "held it wiser, save in moments of special necessity or dangerous temptation, that we should endeavour to find God in all that we do rather than devote a long time continuously to the exercise of prayer. The spirit which he desires to see in the members of the Society is this: that, if possible, they find as much devotion in works of charity or obedience as in prayer and meditation, because everyone of their actions ought to be performed solely for the love and service of God".<sup>15</sup>

Ignatius was particularly anxious that young members of the Society should be trained to this manner of prayer as soon as—but not before—"the proper foundation seems to have been laid for self-abnegation and the indispensable progress in the virtues" (P. IV, Proœm.) He directed Polanco to write to the Rector of Coimbra,

"As, on account of the end aimed at in their studies, our scholastics cannot devote a great deal of time to meditation, let them nourish their piety by endeavouring to realize the presence of God on every occasion, for instance: when conversing with anyone, when going and coming, when at meals, in studying, in listening to the lessons given by their masters, in the things which they see, in short in whatever they do, since the divine Majesty is in all things by presence, by power and by essence. This method of praying, which consists in finding God in everything is easier than that which raises us to divine things of a more abstract nature and which can only be reached with effort and fatigue. It constitutes a most useful practice, calculated to draw down upon us precious visits from our Lord if we prepare ourselves by some short aspirations to receive Him. The scholastics can also give free vent to their devotion by frequently offering to God their studies and their labours, accepting them from love to Him, without regard to their tastes but solely with the desire of serving Him in something and of some day giving help to souls for whose sake He died. And this twofold exercise could be matter for the examination of conscience." (Epist. III, 510)

Ignatius definitely meant this union with God in all things and in every action to be a manner of *prayer*, a contemplation, a certain awareness of God, an 'at homeness—familiarity—with Him'.<sup>16</sup> In his view the best of all prayers, that which—according to Ribadeneira—he praised most frequently, consists in "keeping our thoughts always directed towards God"<sup>17</sup>; and such prayer was possible in action no less than in solitude and recollection.

How exactly could such fixing of the thoughts on God, in the midst of activity, be achieved? Not by any artificial method

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15. *Epist.* III, 502, 1.6.1551

16. It seems to us that the expression 'virtual prayer' for "contemplation in the midst of activity" does not do justice to the mind of St Ignatius. He means more.

17. *Scripta* I, 432



or head-racking device, but by the purity of a heart which seeks and loves only God and consequently is able to find Him and unite with Him in all things. Ignatius puts it clearly and concisely in P. III, c. 1, n. 26 of the Constitutions, the well-known 17th Rule of the Summary.

He recommends: (a) the purest and highest possible intention "not only in their state of life but also in all particulars" (union of the will with God)<sup>18</sup>, (b) a vigorous spirit of faith which "seeks", finds and recognizes God "in all things" after the manner taught in the Contemplation to attain the love of God (union of the intellect with God), (c) the fervour of a heart which, having found God, "loves Him in all creatures and them all in Him" (union of the heart with God), (d) as a *sine qua non* condition to this threefold union, utter selflessness and detachment from all creatures: "casting off as much as possible all love of creatures, that they may place their whole affection on the Creator of them".

[Prayer in the midst of activity may take yet another, more simple form frequently recommended by St Ignatius, *viz.* "holy desires"<sup>19</sup>, the very manner of prayer taught by our Blessed Lord in the first petitions of the Our Father: "Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom come, . . ."]

This manner of prayer Ignatius taught by example even more than by precept. Manare testifies,

"I have seen him more than once, when walking back and forth in the garden, stop and look up to the heavens, entirely absorbed. Sometimes it was the flowers that made him lift his mind to God . . . Or, on meeting one of his sons in the corridor, he would smile at the thought that here was a soul redeemed by the Blood of Jesus Christ . . . To find God he could disengage himself from absorbing occupations with incomparable ease . . . The slightest prayer, grace at meals, was recited in so recollected a voice, after a pause for recollection, that everybody present had to look at him." (Scripta, pp. 241, 242, 367, 388, 528)

Nadal's description of the prayer of our holy Father is even more revealing. See Ignatiana Nov., p. 65.

6. When, therefore, Ignatius preferred that his sons "should seek God in all things rather than devote long hours to prayer and meditation", his intention was not that they should pray less but that they should *pray without cease*; that their prayer should not be confined to their hours of solitude and recollection, but should extend to their apostolic activities as well. He wanted them to observe literally the precept of our Lord "to pray continually" (Luke 18, 1). It was his merit to have seen that this recommendation was not incompatible with an intensive apostolate, nay that prayer could feed on activity. On one condition, however: purity of heart: abnegation "continuous and in all things" (Ex. Gen., c. IV, n. 46).

18. "If every particular thing they do is tending to the service of God, everything is prayer." (*Monum. Ign.*, s. I, t. VI, p. 90)

19. P. IV, c. 10, n. 5; P. VII, c. 4, n. 3; P. IX, c. 6, A

7. Furthermore, contemplation in the midst of activity could *not be divorced from* contemplation in the recollection of one's cell. Nadal's description of our Father's prayer is significant in this respect. To him Ignatius's contemplation of the Blessed Trinity and his facility to find God in all things were but two manifestations of one and the same grace, of one and the same "kind of prayer and contemplation" which illumined the soul of Ignatius and flowed out from him upon all the sons of the Society.

Prayer at the prie-dieu and prayer in action are inseparable. The second is as unthinkable without the first as heat and light without fire. But it is equally true that "one who seeks the Spirit of God in good works will find It better afterwards in prayer".<sup>20</sup> The two manners of prayer are as interdependent as the trunk and its branches. Solitary prayer sustains active contemplation; active contemplation communicates to all the actions and circumstances of life the fire and light enkindled in solitary prayer. Strictly speaking, you can have a trunk without branches but no live branches apart from the trunk: neither can you have contemplation in the midst of activity without regular hours of intensive contemplation.

8. No one esteemed intense prayer more than the author of that manual of prayer called *The Spiritual Exercises*, who himself, at Manresa, used to consecrate seven hours to it every day. In later life, "the saint, according to the advice of the Gospel, shut himself in his room to pray in secret"<sup>21</sup>: but we know that his prayer was continuous, that he never passed an hour without examining his conscience before God, that he was often seen absorbed in prayer in the garden or on the terrace of the house, that all "his vocal prayers were said with a recollection, an attention, a fervour, that were inexpressible".<sup>21</sup>

Did he not consider that the very first quality of the General of the Society was the closest possible union with God "in prayer" no less than "in every action"? Did he not assign as their first obligation to local superiors the duty of sustaining the whole house committed to them by the power of their prayers and holy desires<sup>22</sup>? As a matter of fact it must be noted that, while Ignatius the realist insisted on abnegation being more really conducive to union with God than exercises of prayer, he none the less stressed that "in order to gain empire over one's passions, one needs to apply oneself a long time to meditation, and work at it carefully before God"<sup>23</sup>. Indeed he knows no better means for inducing a man desirous of progress to enter earnestly upon the way of self-denial than the thirty days of intense prayer and meditation of the 'Spiritual Exercises'. And on his sons he imposes three years of secluded contemplative life for the main purpose

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20. St Peter Faber, *Memoriale* for October 1542

21. Dudon, *St. Ignatius of Loyola*, pp. 365, 366.

22. P. IV, c. 10, n. 5

23. Ribadeneira, *Dicta*, n. 62



of "laying the proper foundation for self-abnegation and the indispensable progress in the virtues" <sup>24</sup>.

Still, he did not disguise his misgivings about very protracted prayers for members of the Society. He saw in the inclination of some of them for long hours of daily meditation a fundamental deviation from the genuine spirit of the Society. Quick at discerning spirits and uncovering illusions, he realized that the advocates of protracted prayer ignored the primary importance of abnegation for obtaining union with God and consequently, not unlike men given to excessive corporal austerities, exposed themselves to self-complacency, obstinacy and other dangerous illusions.

"He told me" says Ribadeneira "that, out of a hundred persons who apply themselves to these long prayers, the majority —and I am inclined to think he said 'ninety' —usually come to considerable harm. The Father was speaking particularly of cases of obstinacy. He also wished that mortification and self-denial be the foundation of all. And when he told Nadal that an hour of prayer was enough for those in colleges, he again supposed that they were solidly established in mortification and self-denial. Upon this foundation he raised the whole structure of the Society. This did not prevent that he gave high praise to prayer." (Scripta I, 341-432)

On the other hand, since "for a truly mortified man a quarter-of-an-hour suffices to enter into union with God in prayer", Ignatius concluded that both the apostolate of the Society and the spiritual life of its members could only gain by emphasis being laid on abnegation and mortification rather than on long prayers.

Hence, his legislation for formed members of the Society:

"Considering the duration and the thoroughness of the probation that must precede the admittance of professed or formed coadjutors, it may confidently be expected that they will be spiritual men, so proficient in the ways of Christ the Lord that they will be able to make rapid progress in them, in the measure of their bodily strength and the external occupations prescribed to them by charity or obedience. Consequently, it does not seem opportune to lay down for them any fast rule in the matter of prayer, meditation and fervour, no more than in the practice of fasts, vigils and other austerities and bodily penances, but to bid them follow the dictates of a prudent love —under the guidance, always, of their confessor and, where any doubt arises about what is suitable, the decision of their Superior. Only this general caution will we give that they must avoid, by any excess in these practices, so to weaken their bodily strength or spend their time so lengthily that they have not enough of them left for helping their neighbour spiritually according to the trend of our Institute; nor, on the other hand, should they become so lax in those practices that their spiritual fervour cools down and all their natural and lower instincts boil over." <sup>25</sup>

24. P. IV, Prooem., n. 1; P. III, c. 1, n. 27; P. V, c. 2, n. 1

25. P. VI, c. 3, n. 1. When subsequently the Society departed from this rule and imposed on all one hour of mental prayer —much less than the advocates of long prayer desired—, it only extended to all the permission given by St Ignatius in P. VI, c. 3, A, for the benefit of individuals, and showed its adherence to the spirit rather than the letter of the Constitutions. For, Ignatius too had judged that, in order to acquire that degree of abnegation on which the Society was built, a certain minimum of intense prayer was necessary. The Society found it necessary, after experience, to fix that minimum.

He hastens, however, to add —ever aware as he is of the necessity of personal adaptation, “Should it be thought expedient for some that a definite period for spiritual exercises be prescribed them to prevent any excess or deficiency, let the Superior do so”. (Explanation A)

9. Like everything else in the Society, prayer at the pri-dieu, no less than prayer in activity, is directed towards the *apostolate*: its purpose is not the contemplative’s “enjoyment of God, frui Deo” but “to render the instrument more one with God and docile to the divine guidance” (P. X, n. 2). This ‘utilitarian’ aspect of our prayer must be rightly understood. What St Ignatius wishes his sons to seek in prayer and meditation is, just as the contemplatives do, “to approach and be united with his Creator and Lord” (Sp. Ex., add. 20), but *in order that*, in His light and with His grace and love, they may “cast off as much as is possible all love of creatures, that they may devote their whole affection on the Creator of them”<sup>26</sup>, and fit themselves for His divine service. Still, Ignatius had too much experience of God’s “more precious gifts” not to realize their spiritual value: and so, subject to the test of abnegation and the control of obedience, he put no limits to the spiritual ambitions of his sons. “By these gifts I mean” so he wrote to Francis Borgia “such as it is not in our power to have when we desire them but which are simply bestowed on us by the Giver of all good, to whose almighty power no blessing is too great. Such are, for example, with regard to the divine Majesty, intensity of faith, hope and charity, spiritual peace and joy, tears, deep consolations, elevation of mind, divine impulses and illuminations; all other spiritual tastes and sentiments relating to such gifts, such as humility and profound respect for the Holy Church our Mother, for those who govern it and for its teachers. I do not mean by this that we ought to seek them solely for the pleasure which we find in them: certainly not. But, recognizing that without these gifts all our thoughts, words and actions are confused, cold and troubled, we should desire these gifts in order that through them our thoughts, words and actions may become fervent, enlightened, just, for the greater service of God.”<sup>27</sup>

*Conclusion* — St Ignatius has no such illusion that he should deny the eternal conflict between prayer and action. He knows only too well that ours is a fallen nature, ensnared by the creatures rather than lifted up by them. But he was equally convinced that active apostles receive graces of state to solve the conflict. There is nothing wrong with creatures, but with us. God is everywhere: He can be found in creatures as well as in the seclusion of the heart. But only the pure of heart can see Him in creatures. Hence, the essential need of mortification and detachment from creatures: these are the surest means of union with God in prayer

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26. P. III, c. 1, n. 26

27. *Epist.* II, 236



as well as in action. And since Ignatius wished the members of his Society to find God *in all things* and live in *constant* union with Him, he also asked of them that "it be each one's chief and most earnest endeavour to seek in the Lord his own greater abnegation and continual mortification *in all things* as far as he can".<sup>28</sup>

J. MOYERSON

## Service out of Love

**I**N the last sentence of the Spiritual Exercises St Ignatius has these words, which summarize his spirituality: "We must esteem above all to serve much God our Lord out of pure love".<sup>1</sup>

### To serve

By his conversion St Ignatius, abandoning the service of a temporal king, offered himself unreservedly to the Eternal king; henceforth, life for him could only be one of total service of the greatest and most appealing Leader he had discovered. Gradually, by providential circumstances, it would become clear in what that service would consist, especially when finally he and the companions he had won to the same great cause put themselves at the disposal of the Vicar of Christ his Leader. The important vision of Storta, just before he offered his services to the Pope, had been the divine approval of his ideal; it was there the Heavenly Father asked His Divine Son to take Ignatius as His *servant*, and Christ, carrying His Cross, accepted Ignatius, saying, "I wish you to *serve* me. I will be propitious to you in Rome".

Love for God can express itself in different forms, which do not necessarily exclude one another. For St Ignatius the dominant note, as it were, is *service* out of love; and this was made to blend very well even with his highest mystical graces. In the Contemplation to Attain the Love of God St Ignatius makes the retreatant ask that "in all things he may love and serve the Divine Majesty". Ignatius's ideal was to work unremittingly, to spend himself for his Master, for the interests of his Master—the work of souls, but according to His directions and intentions, and for whatever work He might entrust in whatever place it might be. This should be the ideal of every son of Ignatius.<sup>2</sup>

This ideal of St Ignatius was expressed in practice by the Fourth Vow of the Professed, the obligation of which is incumbent upon all the formed members of the Society, though not on all by virtue of a vow<sup>3</sup>. It was natural that, from this ideal of service, obedience would be the characteristic virtue of a Jesuit,

28. Ex. Gen. c. 4, n. 46; Rule 12

1. Rule 18 of the Rules for thinking with the Church

2. Cf. de Guibert, *La Spiritualité de la Compagnie de Jésus*, pp. 591ff.

3. Cf. Epitome, n. 477

because for him orders from the Pope or his Superiors are orders from Christ, and service of Christ would have no meaning unless there was this striving towards excellence in obedience.

### To serve much

This service of Christ, as conceived by St Ignatius, is not any kind of service, but an intense service (*multum servire*). It is the answer to Christ's appeal to "those who wish to give greater proof of their love and to distinguish themselves in whatever concerns the *service* of the Eternal King and Lord of all"<sup>4</sup>.

What will be the norm by which we can judge how to serve much? The *greater glory of God*. Service of God and glory of God are so intimately connected that often in the Constitutions and the Spiritual Exercises St Ignatius uses them indiscriminately. Usually even he adds the comparative 'greater', referring implicitly to the conclusion of the Foundation, "Our one desire and choice should be what is *more* conducive to the end for which we were created (to praise, reverence and serve God)" — the comparative implying a continual progress in clearer realization and more thorough execution.

The radical condition of such greater service will be the fundamental and primary necessity of *total abnegation*—the virtue proper to one who has dedicated himself entirely to serve someone else, for he has to forego all his own likes and dislikes, to do away with all that may be an obstacle to entire devotedness in such unconditional service.<sup>5</sup> Hence the conclusion of the meditation on the Kingdom of Christ, that "they will act against their sensuality and carnal and worldly love and make offerings of greater value and of more importance". Hence also the great stress St Ignatius put on abnegation, deeming it more fundamental and more efficacious than prayer for the members of the Society.

This abnegation is found chiefly in an entire and most faithful *obedience*, the characteristic of one who wants to be exclusively at the beck and call of his Master to serve His interests; but an obedience that will enter into the views of the one who commands, an obedience that exercises its initiative in the free scope left to it,—in a word, a whole-hearted obedience out of love for the Master, which puts all its energies into action for an ever *greater service*. This however is not possible unless, in a spirit of faith, one sees Christ in the Superior—such an essential point in obedience that it was already expressed in the First Formula of the Institute.

This entire and unreserved obedience implies entire *disposability*, without which *greater service* is impossible. How fundamental this generous attitude is we can realize already from the very beginning of the Spiritual Exercises: "It will be very prof-

4. Spiritual Exercises: Meditation on the Kingdom of Christ

5. Cf. de Guibert, *ibid*.



itable for him to offer ( to the Creator and Lord ) his entire will and liberty, that His Divine Majesty may dispose of him and all he possesses according to His holy Will " ( 5th Annot. ), until the concluding offering of the Contemplation to Attain Love: " Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty . . . dispose of it ( all ) wholly according to Thy Will ".

In practice, this disposability must be had not only towards Christ, but, since He acts through human agents, also towards His representatives whom He has placed over us. The consequence is that the Superior must know us thoroughly, in order best to direct our activity to God's *greater service*; hence the need of the *Account of Conscience*, an essential element of our Institute.

This service, however, is not of isolated individuals, but of a team working for the *greater service* of Christ. Hence the essential condition of close union and deep fraternal charity among ourselves, for by it " we will be able better and more effectually to apply ourselves to the service of God and the help of our neighbour ".<sup>6</sup> It follows from this that we must be ready to help one another to achieve the best results both by manifesting, when need be, to Superiors the obstacles to the service of Christ, namely, the faults and defects of our brethren, and especially by accepting humbly to be corrected ourselves by others.<sup>7</sup>

### Out of pure love

This greater service is to be one of love, and of the purest love. In all our activities, in all the details of our lives, love must be the motive and the driving power. Love is the only explanation of our total service to Christ.<sup>8</sup> All through the Spiritual Exercises and Constitutions St Ignatius desires that love for God be our motivation —from Rule 17, where he asks us " always sincerely to serve and please the Divine Goodness for itself in all particulars . . . that they may place their whole affection on the Creator, loving Him in all creatures and them all in Him ", and his clear directions that the Constitutions should not oblige under pain of sin, in order that love and desire of perfection and the greater glory of God may take the place of other motives<sup>9</sup>, to the more particular directions, as, for example, in obedience and in government, where he insists on the spirit of love. Even in our educational institutions we must inculcate in the boys the *service and love* of God and of virtues, and the intention of referring all their studies to this end<sup>10</sup>. This pure love that St Ignatius proposes to us as our ideal will gradually make of us, according to the phraseology of Nadal, contemplatives in action.

6. Summary, Rule 42

7. Summary, Rules 9 and 10

8. Cf. the Meditation on the Kingdom

9. Const. P. VI, c. 5

10. Const. P. IV, c. 16, n. 4

It is striking how, throughout the Spiritual Exercises, the Constitutions and his spiritual diary, St Ignatius combines with this pure love a deep *reverence*. Often he affirms it explicitly, oftener still, implicitly by the use of such forms of address as 'His Divine Majesty'. It is the perfect blending of these deepest sentiments of love and reverence that brings us to the highest point of our spirituality: the Third Degree of Humility, as given in the Spiritual Exercises and explained more fully in the 11th rule of the Summary. This highest degree of humility could as well be called the third degree of love, for here love and humility become so blended that one can scarcely distinguish between them. How pure the motive of love is here becomes clear from the supposition St Ignatius makes that God's glory is equally served whether we choose poverty or riches, honour or ignominy.

Yet, however ardent and pure that love, it must not transgress the limits of discretion or prudence in its exterior expression of zeal and charity: "*discreta caritas*" (*discreet charity*) is a frequent phrase in the Constitutions. By this discretion and prudence is not meant a pusillanimous love or a merely humanly prudent love, but a daring and magnanimous love that acts with the boldness of supernatural prudence once it has discerned through prayerful reflection what is for God's greater glory, with nothing of the intemperate zeal that disedifies men and is more exacting than God's grace.

As "everything in the Society has to be directed towards the apostolate"<sup>11</sup>, our spirituality must be, and in fact is, essentially apostolic, and this is best expressed by the phrase: service out of love. While love signifies not only the most powerful impulse and driving force, but as well the highest possible motivation by which perfection and holiness are constituted, service expresses the apostolic activity, and makes clear the exacting demands of abnegation—especially obedience, and their full consequences in active life. The realization of their love for God through total service is for members of an apostolic order their way to attain God.

L. SCHILLEBEECKX

11. A.R. XI, 1948, p. 581

*Warmly recommended*

## MILES CHRISTI IESU

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on the

Summary of the Constitutions

by

ARTHUR VERMEERSCH S.J.

Translation of Rev. E. F. Erbacher  
of the Missouri Province

Reprinted as a Souvenir of the Ignatian Year 1955-56

604 pages—Rs 6/- (plus post)

CHRIST HALL / KOZHIKODE 6 / INDIA

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